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ABSTRACT

A project was undertaken to (1) develop a model for regional planning of vocational education based on service center regions in Texas; (2) establish an effective communications system for providers of occupational education in the state; (3) provide a process for the inservice training of participants in regional vocational planning; and (4) develop a process of articulation between all entities (providers, business/industry, and government) of the planning region. After examining all the data compiled during the project, the project staff recommended that the Texas State Board for Vocational Education should establish 24 technical assistance regions in the state for the purpose of providing technical assistance to local providers in the planning, articulating, and evaluating of vocational education and job skill training programs. The following recommendations were also made: (1) the boundaries of these regions should coincide with the boundaries of the 24 Councils of Governments in the state; (2) they should be designated official areas for the planning and articulation of vocational education; (3) the State Board should reassign staff of the Department of Occupational Education and Technology to provide for at least one staff member to serve each of the 24 regions; and (4) a two-way communication system should be established to evaluate services delivered at the state regional, and local levels. (MN)

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REGIONAL PLANNING/ARTICULATION

A Final Report of
Research by

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Sponsored Cooperatively by
Research Coordinating Unit
Department of Occupational Education and Technology
Texas Education Agency

and

North Texas State University

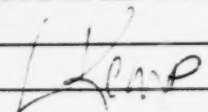
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REGIONAL PLANNING/ARTICULATION

Planning Processes	Communication System
Inservice Program	Articulation Processes

The project reported herein was performed through a contract with the Texas Education Agency under the provisions of the Vocational Amendments of 1976 (Public Law 94-482). Contractees undertaking such projects are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Texas Agency position or policy.

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Problem

Comprehensive planning and articulation is a concern of vocational educators in Texas today. The nature of this concern is the increasing demand that programs of vocational education and job training be articulated and cooperatively planned to obtain maximum results from the resources expended. For years both State and Federal legislation have mandated that cooperative planning be a requisite for receiving financial assistance for vocational education and training by state and local agencies and institutions.

In a recent study (1982) conducted by the Research Triangle Institute of North Carolina (RTI) under contract with the Texas Education Agency, it was found that "Sixteen state agencies and five state commissions were identified as having state statutory responsibility or authority for provision of vocational/occupational education in training programs and services."

It has been recognized by the findings of the RTI study and other studies conducted prior to the RTI study that the governance of twenty-one entities at the state level has created a duplication and overlap of services. The duplication and overlap has resulted in the inefficient and inequitable use of the state's resources for vocational education and training programs.

The findings of such studies have contributed significantly to the concern for a conducive climate for comprehensive planning at the regional and local levels. In its efforts to promote articulation and comprehensive planning, the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE) has proposed rules and regulations that will expedite comprehensive planning and articulation of vocational/technical education and training programs. Two of these proposed rules of the SBOE are:

All new, additional, and continuing vocational teacher units shall offer competency-based instruction. Instruction shall be based on the Central Education Agency-approved essential elements. A competency profile shall be maintained for each student enrolled.

All new and additional vocational teacher unit requests shall include a plan for articulation between the proposed vocational unit and existing postsecondary programs in the area. The request must also include evidence that an articulation agreement will be implemented between the applying district and the postsecondary institution involved.

Additionally, the SBOE through the Research Coordinating Unit of the Department of Occupational Education and Technology supported the development of regional planning by the dissemination of RFA-R04: Regional Planning/Articulation. (The subject of this final report.)

Objectives

The objectives of this project are:

1. To develop a model for regional planning of vocational education based on a service center region in Texas.
2. To develop an effective communications system for occupational education providers.
3. To provide a process for inservice to participants in regional vocational planning.
4. To develop a process of articulation (collaboration) between all entities (providers, business/industry, and government) of the planning region.

Table 1 shows the outcomes of this project by objective.

TABLE 1
PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
1. To develop a model for regional planning of vocational education based on a service center region in Texas.	Development of a model of regional planning for vocational education. Validation of the model by the review of the Technical Advisory Committee.
2. To develop an effective communications system for occupational education providers.	Development of a communications system for coordination of planning by providers of vocational/technical training. Validation of the model by the users.

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Outcome</u>
3. To provide a process for inservice to participants in regional vocational planning.	Development of knowledge, skills, and attitude necessary for regional planning and articulation. Accomplished by the process of inservice training for providers of vocational/technical education in the eight county area.
4. To develop a process of articulation between all entities of the planning region.	Development of a model (process) of articulation for use by entities of the planning region. Validation of the processes by reviews of the Technical Advisory Committee.

Table 2 shows the assignment of staff by project objective.

TABLE 2
STAFF ASSIGNMENT BY PROJECT OBJECTIVE

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Objective</u>
Russell Davis Bill Lovelace	Develop a model for regional planning of vocational education based on a service center region in Texas.
Bill Lovelace	Develop an effective communication system for occupational education providers.
Marcia James	Develop a process of articulation among all entities of the planning region.
Roger Ditzenberger Bill Lovelace Russell Davis Marcia James	Provide a process for inservice to participants in regional vocational planning.

Procedures

This section of the final report is based on the rationale for utilizing selected procedures, a listing of tasks and narrative description of activities performed to achieve each task, and a management plan which includes how each objective was met according to a time schedule.

Rationale. Based on the findings of the literature reviewed, the model for articulation and the model for regional coverage (planning) developed as working papers by the project completed by the Research Triangle Institute were used for the project. The models were products of the project "A Study to Make Recommendations Regarding a Comprehensive State Occupational Education Program," completed by the Research Triangle Institute of North Carolina under Contract No. 701-82-07 with the Texas Education Agency. The objectives and purposes of this project were achieved through the modification and demonstration of these two models.

Listing and description of tasks. The four objectives and the specifications of this project and the working papers of the Research Triangle Institute were analyzed for the identification and implementation of the following tasks selected for this project.

Task 1. Form and use a Technical Advisory Committee.

The project staff used a Technical Advisory Committee in the finalization and validation of the model, the communication system, and the processes of articulation and inservice training. The membership of the Technical Advisory Committee represented the following agencies and organizations:

- Local Education Agencies (3)
- Texas Employment Commission (1)
- Private Industry Councils (2)
- Proprietary Schools (1)
- Postsecondary Institutions (2)
- Regional Councils of Government (1)
- Business, Industry, and Government (3)
- Community Based Organization (1)
- State Agencies (5)

The Project Administrator met with the Texas Education Agency Project Officer for the approval of a proposed list of individuals who were to serve as members of the Technical Advisory Committee. Letters of invitation were sent to approved members. Included with this letter of invitation was a description of the project, its purposes and objectives, the functions of

the Technical Advisory Committee, the composition of the Technical Advisory Committee, the date, location, and agenda for the orientation meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee.

Appendix A lists the names of the official members of the Technical Advisory Committee. (If the committee member could not attend a meeting, the member was asked to send a candidate in his/her place.)

The Technical Advisory Committee members served in two major roles for the project: (1) as an advisory body to the project staff in the review of the project products and sub-products; (2) as reviewers of the (a) names of individuals to serve on sub-committees such as the Regional Articulation Committee, (b) topics and presenters for the inservice training, (c) design and implementation of the communications system, and (d) processes of articulation.

The Technical Advisory Committee convened for a one-day orientation meeting at the Education X Service Center in Richardson, Texas. During that meeting, the members were:

- (1) made aware of the project and project objectives,
- (2) provided a report on the literature reviewed (including the RTI models) with opportunities for interaction and modification of the models, (3) asked to recommend modification of the models and topics, presenters, and schedules for the inservice training activities, (4) described procedures for obtaining committee input (subsequent meetings, and oral and written communication), (5) asked to suggest due dates for their inputs, and (6) asked to validate all materials produced by the project.

Subsequent to the orientation meeting, the Technical Advisory Committee met with the Project Staff three times (October 24, 1984, February 20, 1985, and May 14, 1985). Although the original application states that "no less than six meetings of the Technical Advisory Committee will take place," only four were held due to progress of the project.

At the meeting held on October 24, 1984, a review and discussion of papers relating to the planning process, the orientation and use of the planning committee, and an overview of the model for Regional Planning/Articulation, Characteristics of the Region, and the Communication System, were presented.

The paper of the Regional Planning Articulation model depicted a framework with four basic components: (1) Planning Processes, (2) Communication System, (3) Inservice Program, and (4) Process of Articulation.

(The Process of Articulation was later changed to the Processes of Articulation because of the need to distinguish between instructional articulation and collaborative articulation.)

The paper relating to the planning process, Rationale and Scope and Orientation and Use of the Planning Committee, has two parts. Part I defines the types of planning that can be applied in Regional Planning. Part II gives general information for those providers involved in vocational/technical education in the region. This paper was later refined for use in the process of inservice training--objective 3 of the project.

The goals and roles for the Regional Planning/Articulation Model were reviewed in the third document presented at the meeting. The structure, geographic boundaries, and physical location were also presented.

Finally, the first draft of the Communication System was presented to the group. The project staff emphasized how the communication system is interwoven in all the components of the Regional Planning/Articulation Model. Planning, assessment, and evaluation are all important variables in the communication process of regional planning.

At the meeting held on February 20, 1985, the Technical Advisory Committee members were asked to critique materials that they had received in the mail prior to the meeting. The materials included two documents: Regional Planning Model and the Communication System. The outlines of both documents are shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively.

I. REGIONAL PLANNING MODEL

- A. Introduction
- B. Regional Planning/Articulation Model
- C. Planning system and process
- D. Demographic profile
- E. Determining training needs of priority occupations
 - 1. Determining need for job training
 - 2. Identification of training requirements for priority occupations

FIGURE 1: OUTLINE FOR REGIONAL PLANNING MODEL DOCUMENT

Each member was given the opportunity to critique the materials. The general reaction of the membership

was that the materials needed to be synthesized and paged for easy reference. Also, the section on articulation processes was discussed.

II. COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

- A. Introduction
- B. The need of communication system
- C. The design of the communication system
- D. The installation of the communication system

FIGURE 2: OUTLINE OF THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM DOCUMENT

Prior to the May 14, 1985 meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee, the membership was mailed: (1) a Technical Advisory Attitudinal Survey of Regional Planning/Articulation, (2) an Executive Summary of the project, (3) the Process of Articulation, (4) an Inservice Training outline, and (5) a list of members.

The purpose of having the committee members complete the attitudinal survey was to determine their opinion of the importance of each function of the Regional Planning Unit. A discussion of the opinions (at the meeting) addressed duplicate functions of the Regional Planning Unit as well as terminology conflicts.

The main purpose for developing an Executive Summary was to synthesize the project. This Executive Summary was later expanded and submitted to the Texas Education Agency.

A 35-page document on the Articulation Process was also mailed to the advisory committee members. Figure 3 shows an outline of this document. Based upon the input by the committee, the document was amended for final dissemination.

III. PROCESSES OF ARTICULATION

- A. Introduction and definition
- B. Model of instructional articulation processes
 - 1. Legislation and policy
 - a. Carl Perkins Act
 - b. House Bill 72
 - 2. Coordination
 - a. State
 - b. Regional
 - c. Local
 - 3. Implementation
 - a. Roles and responsibilities of:
 - (1) Regional Planning Unit
 - (2) Regional Articulation Committee
 - (3) Program Articulation Committee
 - b. Provision for inservice training
 - 4. Evaluation
 - a. Process
 - b. Evaluative criteria
- C. Collaborative articulation
 - 1. Definition
 - 2. Model
 - a. Regional Planning Unit
 - b. Local providers
 - c. Business, industry, and government
 - 3. Strategies
- D. Resources for articulation

FIGURE 3: OUTLINE FOR ARTICULATION PROCESSES DOCUMENT

Figure 4 shows the outline for the Inservice Training document. Initially, the process of inservice was determined to be objective 3 in the document. However, during the course of the project, it was changed to objective 4. Therefore, the articulation processes became objective 3. This change was necessary due to the fact that the articulation processes had to be included in the inservice document.

IV. INSERVICE TRAINING

- A. Regional/Planning Articulation Model
 - 1. Rationale for regional/planning articulation
 - a. The mission of the Regional Planning Unit
 - b. The components of the regional planning model
 - 2. Representation makeup of the model
 - a. Regional planning/articulation staff
 - b. Technical advisory committee
 - c. Recipients of technical assistance
 - 3. The planning process
 - a. Types of planning
 - b. Organizational objectives
 - c. Four-step planning process
 - 4. Orientation and use of the planning committee
 - a. Structure for regional planning/articulation
 - b. Orientation to the planning body
 - c. Input to the planning body
 - d. Planning body characteristics
 - e. Planning body operations
 - 5. Procedures for planning on a regional basis
 - a. Demographics
 - b. Present and projected manpower requirements
 - c. Funding sources
 - d. Levels of funding for the vocational education effort
 - e. Funding formulae
 - f. L.E.A. organizational and operating characteristics
 - g. Data input sources and uses
- B. Communication system
 - 1. The need of the communication system
 - 2. The design of the communication system
 - 3. The installation of the communication system
- C. Articulation processes
 - 1. Essential characteristics of articulation
 - 2. Barriers to articulation
 - 3. Instructional articulation definition
 - 4. Model of instructional articulation description
 - 5. Dallas model review
 - 6. Collaborative articulation definition
 - 7. Model of collaborative articulation description
 - 8. Collaboration examples
 - 9. Articulation resources
 - 10. Roles of participants:
 - a. Administrators and supervisors
 - b. Guidance personnel
 - c. Vocational instructors

FIGURE 4: OUTLINE FOR INSERVICE TRAINING DOCUMENT

Overall, the meeting on May 14 was dedicated to the functions of the Regional Planning Unit and the Articulation Processes. The committee members reacted to the final products of the Regional Planning/Articulation Model by mail.

Task 2. Review of Literature

The review of the literature was completed for the purpose of: (1) determining the state-of-the-art for regional planning and articulation of vocational/technical education and training; (2) identifying providers within the region, and description of the population served, and types of programs by each provider; (3) identifying Federal and state mandates and rules governing vocational/technical education and manpower training programs in Texas; (4) identifying communication systems, appropriate survey items for use in the assessment; and (5) the identification of services and activities specifically related to:

- a. methods for providing for special needs students;
- b. materials for promoting equal access to vocational/technical education;
- c. computer application in planning and articulation;
- d. the needs of students with limited English proficiency;
- e. methods of validation.

NTSU has an extensive assortment of materials related to Regional Planning/Articulation of Vocational Programs. This collection of materials was supplemented by a computerized search of relevant information retrieval system, e.g., ERIC. All material was reviewed carefully for descriptions of other materials related to regional planning and articulation of vocational/technical education. In addition, organizations such as the Office of Vocational and Adult Education of the U.S. Department of Education, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education and the Employment and Training Division of the U.S. Department of Labor were contacted.

Appendix B contains a complete listing of the sources that were utilized in developing the products of the project and in carrying out the objectives and specifications of this project.

Task 3. Develop, Implement, and Validate a Model for Regional Planning for Occupational Education.

Based on the completed review of the literature, especially the working papers of the Research Triangle Institute (RTI), it was proposed that the final model be the product of the modification and interfacing of the models of articulation and regional coverage developed by RTI. The project staff modified the models for use at the regional level based on the findings from the review of the literature. The modified model (including implementation procedures) was presented to the Technical Advisory Committee for review and recommendations. The models are presented in the final products -- The Regional Planning/Articulation Model and the Articulation Processes.

Task 4. Develop and Validate a Communication System.

A comprehensive communication system is essential to the planning of occupational training whether it be at the local, regional, or state level. For this project, a communication system was proposed that provides for: (1) written and oral communications among and between the providers for purposes of coordination and collaboration in planning; and (2) the collection and sharing of quantitative data essential to planning, evaluating, and reporting of occupational training programs. The system was developed from a review of the literature and the needs of the providers as determined during inservice training sessions related to regional communication systems. The communication system was developed and validated to serve both the planning model and when appropriate, the articulation model.

Resources for the communication system were identified through interaction with the advisory committee members and the review of the literature. A draft of the proposed communication system was reviewed by the advisory committee. A second draft was prepared upon recommendations of the advisory committee and is the final product for the communication system.

Task 5. Provide Inservice Training.

In order for the Regional Planning Unit to carry out the Regional Planning/Articulation Model and processes and to implement the communication systems, training must take place.

A list of instructional topics was developed from a review of the schedule of events selected for the demonstration of the planning model, the communication systems, and the articulation model. The instructional

topics were reviewed by the advisory committee who were given an outline (Figure 4).

The inservice materials, which are in final document form, include narrative descriptions, handouts, and transparencies for presentation of materials.

Task 6. Develop and Validate Processes for Articulation.

Because of several changes in project staff whose main responsibility was Task 6 and because of the late addition of Dr. James to the project, Task 6 was amended.

The following amended steps were carried out to develop the articulation processes:

a. A review of the literature and a review of the model developed by RTI

b. A review of a four-page draft by the Technical Advisory Committee

c. Based upon input from the Technical Advisory Committee, the development of a 35-page document which addressed instructional articulation and collaborative articulation. A major section on resources for these articulation processes was also included in the document.

d. A review of the document by the Technical Advisory Committee.

e. Final editing and printing of the document.

f. Development of the inservice materials for the articulation processes.

g. Review of the inservice materials by the Technical Advisory Committee.

Task 7. Evaluate Project.

Good management practice and policy requires an evaluation procedure using at least three dimensions and purposes. The first purpose of the evaluation is to obtain information as to the designing of project products to serve the populations in the field. Second, the evaluation will ensure that activities of the proposed Management Plan will achieve the stated project objectives. The third purpose, in a summative mode, will provide information on the impact of disseminated products.

To achieve these purposes, the project staff used a proven evaluation mode. The Discrepancy Evaluation Model (Provus, 1971) provided the framework for the evaluation of the operation of the project as illustrated below:

<u>Stages</u>	<u>Content</u>
	(Input-Process-Output)
1. Design	1. Design adequacy
2. Installation	2. Installation fidelity
3. Process	3. Process adjustment
4. Product	4. Product assessment

Evaluation was completed in terms of four major stages of the project--design, installation, process, and product. Below is a brief summary of each type of evaluation that was used in the project.

Design criteria determined for the staff include:

1. A description of the population and the selection criteria;
2. A description of staff, their selection criteria and level of project competence;
3. The major terminal objectives of the project stated behaviorally;
4. The tasks that must be completed before the objectives can be realized;
5. The sequence of activities and the nature and sequence of tasks leading to completion of the objectives;
6. External review of drafts of projects for dissemination;
7. Identification of population for dissemination of project information;
8. A description of staff functions and number and type of position; and
9. The casting of all program activity in a time frame to position events relative to each other in time.

Program installation evaluation is an observation of project activity as it compares with the program standards for each task constituting stage two.

Process evaluation, stage three, enlists the aid of program staff in flow charting the relationship between objectives and tasks. Product evaluation, stage four, utilizes the traditional experimental design to determine if the project achieved its objectives.

Below is a list of the steps that were followed relative to each of the four types of evaluation-- design, program installation, process, and product.

Design of the evaluation was established during the pre-evaluation stage in cooperation with the project staff, the project advisory committee, and the TEA Project Officer. Program definition was accomplished utilizing as major input, the proposal document. Thus the first stage of the evaluation effort consisted on a comparison of performance information and program design criteria.

Installation, the second stage of evaluation, consisted of a consideration of project fidelity. Specifically, how congruent the organization of the project was compatible with the project definition was determined. Project management activities were carefully analyzed.

Process evaluation considered, among other things, the following:

1. Sequential progress toward attaining objectives; and
2. Congruence of time frames; that is, the designated flow of activities and the actual flow of activities.

Product, the final stage of evaluation, involved the review of each designated, scheduled product.

As each stage of evaluation was implemented, three dimensions were considered. These dimensions were input, process, and output. Basically, input variables consisted of resource allocations while process variables depicted the methodology. Output employed four stages; design, installation, process, and product that were considered in terms of input, process, and output variables. Application of the discrepancy evaluation model produced evaluative data for each stage--design adequacy, installation, fidelity, process adjustment, and product assessment for review by the Texas Education Agency and the Technical Advisory Committee.

Many different kinds of decisions were made. Therefore a brief summary of each type of evaluation which was used is provided below:

Input evaluation provided information for deciding whether outside assistance should be sought for meeting goals and objectives, what strategies should be employed--the adoption of already developed solutions or the development of new ones--and what design or procedural plan should be employed for implementing the selected strategy.

Process evaluation provided information and feedback to the project staff and others responsible for continuous control and refinement of plans and procedures. The objective was to detect or predict, during the implementation stage, defects in the procedural design or its implementation. The overall strategy was to identify and monitor, on a continuous, noninterventionist basis, the potential sources of failure in a project. Thus decision makers were not only provided with information needed for overcoming procedural difficulties, but also with a record of process information to be used later for interpreting project outcomes.

Output evaluation provided information for deciding to continue, terminate, or refocus an activity, and for linking the activity to other major phases of the process. The objectives of product evaluation were to relate outcomes to objectives and to context and input--to measure and interpret outcomes.

Input into the evaluation process was provided by the TEA Project Officer, management of meetings of project staff, and the Technical Advisory Committee. External review and evaluation were obtained from the Technical Advisory Committee through both written and oral communications. The reviews with the TEA Project Officer through individual face-to-face contact as well as written communication and telephone conversations provided an opportunity for TEA to provide guidance and leadership which are essential to the success of the project.

Task 8. Coordinate the Project with Other Institutions and Organizations.

Secondary and postsecondary vocational personnel were made aware of the project and provided with an opportunity to communicate with the staff and Technical Advisory Committee members of the project. Two examples of opportunities were the invitations extended to secondary and postsecondary vocational personnel to participate on the Technical Advisory Committee and the

presentation of the project at the Research Coordinating Unit meeting in February 1985 in Austin.

Communication and coordination were maintained with other organizations such as vocational teacher education institutions, Professional Vocational Organizations, the Advisory Council for Technical-Vocational Education in Texas, Coordination Board, Texas College and University System, and the Training and Employment Division of the Texas Department of Community affairs. Performance of this task included but was not limited to the following activities:

1. Development of an Executive Summary;
2. Dissemination of the Executive Summary to agencies and organizations identified above plus others identified by the TEA;
3. Responding to inquiries generated by the Executive Summary;
4. Acceptance of invitations to make presentations about the project;
5. Preparation of articles for inclusion in professional newsletters when requested; and
6. High level coordination with institutions or organizations which were awarded contracts for RFA's: R01, R02, R03, and R07. Priority coordination and communications were carried out by the project staff with ESCX, PIC's, TEA, TEC, and TDCA.

Task 9. Prepare and Submit Reports.

The Project Administrator submitted five copies of quarterly progress reports to the TEA Project Officer within five working days of the end of each calendar quarter for which the report was to be prepared.

The final report of the project was prepared by the project staff in the format recommended by the Texas Education Agency in a paper published October 1, 1984. One hundred copies of the final report and ten copies of the four documents produced by the project were submitted to Texas Education Agency on June 30, 1985.

Management Plan and Timeline. This project was completed using a Management by Tasks (MBT) system for overall management. The MBT system provides for making adjustments without detriment to the project in the event unforeseen constraints surfaced which had potential of interfering with the achievement of tasks and activities as planned. A sound project management was essential in carrying out the program plan.

Table 3 shows the nine tasks of the project, their intended completion date, and their actual completion date.

TABLE 3
PROJECT TASKS AND COMPLETION DATES

<u>Task No.</u>	<u>Intended Completion Date</u>	<u>Actual Completion Date</u>
1	June, 1985	June, 1985
2	February, 1985	March, 1985
3	May, 1985	May, 1985
4	May, 1985	May, 1985
5	April, 1985	June, 1985
6	June, 1985	June, 1985
7	June, 1985	June, 1985
8	June, 1985	June, 1985
9	June, 1985	June, 1985

Results and Accomplishments

In addition to this comprehensive Final Report required of all projects funded by the Vocational Research Coordinating Unit of the Texas Education Agency, this project has produced the following four documents:

1. Technical Assistance by Region for Planning and Articulation of Vocational/Technical Education and Job Training: A Guide.
2. Communication Systems Design for Regional Planning/Articulation of Vocational Education.
3. Guide of Articulation Processes for Regional Articulation of Vocational/Technical Education.
4. Inservice Training for Regional Planning/Articulation of Vocational Education: A Resource Manual.

Detailed outlines of these documents are provided in Figures 1-4 of this report. Copies of the above documents may be obtained by contacting Dr. R.D. Bristow, Director, Research Coordinating Unit, Department of Occupational Education and Technology, Texas Education Agency, 201 East 11th Street, Austin, Texas 78701.

Other project accomplishments include conducting four Technical Advisory Committee meetings, making a presentation of the project at the Research Coordinating Unit meeting, and submitting three quarterly reports.

Findings/Conclusions

During the synthesis of the reviewed literature and the development of the four documents, several findings and conclusions were made. The analysis of these are:

1. There is a definite need for technical assistance to local providers in planning vocational education and job skill training programs.
2. Labor Market Information, which is essential to planning and evaluating vocational education and job skill training programs, is compiled and reported for geographic areas constituting the State Official Planning Regions (Council of Governments)--Figure 5.
3. The present system for collecting and reporting vocational education data does not meet the needs for planning at the local or regional levels.
4. Local education agencies and postsecondary institutions are developing plans for articulating approved vocational education programs without reference to priority occupations of labor market areas.
5. Technical assistance, by state agencies, is not being provided to local providers of vocational education and job skill training for (1) coordinating planning efforts and (2) to ensure that vocational education and job skill training are responsive to the needs of the labor market.

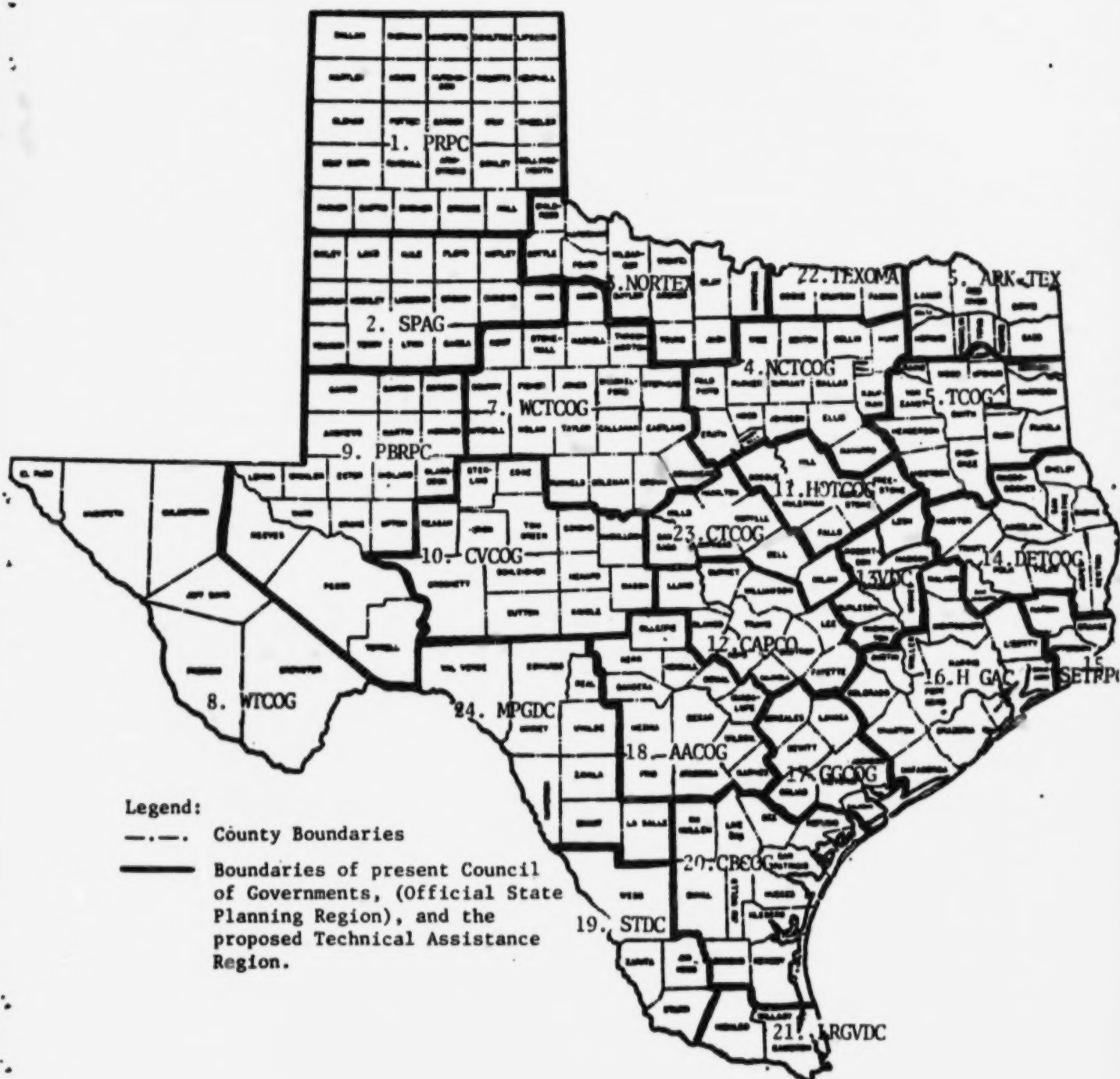


FIGURE 5: STATE OFFICIAL PLANNING REGIONS

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The State Board for Vocational Education should establish 24 Technical Assistance Regions in Texas for the purpose of providing technical assistance to local providers in the planning, articulating, and evaluating of vocational education and job skill training programs. The geographic boundaries of the 24 Technical Assistance Regions should be the same as the geographic boundaries of the 24 Councils of Governments.
2. The State Board for Vocational Education should designate each of the 24 Technical Assistance Regions as official areas for planning and articulation of vocational education programs.
3. The State Board for Vocational Education should establish a communication system for effective planning and evaluating vocational education programs in each of the 24 Technical Assistance Regions. The communication system must provide for a two-way flow of data essential to planning and evaluating vocational education and job skill training at the local, regional, and state levels.
4. The State Board should reassign staff of the Department of Occupational Education and Technology to provide for at least one staff member to serve each of the 24 Technical Assistance Regions.
5. The four products (documents) of this project should be used as guides in the creation and implementation of the technical assistance to eligible recipients (local providers) on a regional basis.

APPENDIX A

Members of Technical Advisory Committee

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APPENDIX B
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